

and business success all seemed to be truly boundless. He was full of life and kept impossibly busy with a wide array of projects that were both interesting and impacted his community for the good.

I know all Senators are grieving with and praying for our colleague Senator FEINSTEIN and their entire family at this very difficult time. Elaine and I join in those thoughts and prayers in a particular way.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

WOMEN'S HEALTH PROTECTION ACT OF 2021—Motion to Proceed—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of the motion to proceed to H.R. 3755, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 139, H.R. 3755, a bill to protect a person's ability to determine whether to continue or end a pregnancy, and to protect a health care provider's ability to provide abortion services.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The senior Senator from Illinois.

REMEMBERING RICHARD C. BLUM

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I want to begin my remarks by joining Senator MCCONNELL in expressing my condolences to our friend and colleague Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN on the passing of her husband and partner Richard Blum.

Dick Blum was a trailblazer in the Senate family, one of the first men to join the Senate Spouses club. He was proud of Senator FEINSTEIN's historic career in public service.

He was a success at business and invested his wealth in easing human suffering—from the streets of San Francisco to some of the poorest corners of the globe. He founded the American Himalayan Foundation to assist the people of the Himalayas. He also founded the Blum Center for Developing Economies at UC Berkeley to help teach students about microlending, social enterprise, and other ways for poor people in developing nations to lift themselves from poverty.

A story in today's Los Angeles Times contained an anecdote that captured well Dick's good humor and generous spirit.

He said that in all the conversations he had over the years with Buddhist friends in the Himalayas, no one had ever convinced him of the likelihood of reincarnation. Maybe that is why he worked so hard to achieve so much good in this one lifetime he was given. He did more to ease human suffering than others might do in a dozen lifetime opportunities.

To Senator DIANNE FEINSTEIN, their beloved daughters and grandchildren, and all who knew and loved him, Loretta and I offer our condolences.

Dick Blum's friendship was a gift, and his memory will be a blessing.

NOMINATION OF KETANJI BROWN JACKSON

Madam President, on another note, there was a historic announcement last Friday when President Joe Biden announced Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson as his choice to serve as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. I am going to speak about her nomination at length tomorrow, but a few words now.

She is an extraordinary person. To become the first African-American woman nominated to serve on the Supreme Court, you have to be the best—and she has proven throughout her life that she is.

She was a clerk to the retiring Justice Stephen Breyer, whose seat she now aspires to. She worked in the practice of law in so many different aspects and then on three different occasions came before this U.S. Senate for approval, advise and consent. On all three occasions, she emerged with bipartisan support, and we certainly hope to see that revisited again.

She has authored some 500 different opinions, so there will be no mystery about her jurisprudence or her judicial philosophy. She has also been a person who has come before our committee as recently as last year when she was approved by the committee in June to serve on the DC Circuit Court.

I think she is an exceptional choice, and I want to make sure that the hearing that is given to her is respectful, fair, and professional. I have reached out to Senator GRASSLEY, my friend and the ranking member on the committee, to work toward that goal, and I hope all members of the committee will join us.

UKRAINE

Madam President, on a separate topic, I just returned from the Munich Security Conference and a visit to our NATO allies in Poland and Lithuania. On the latter part of that trip, I was joined by Senator CHRIS COONS of Delaware and Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN of New Hampshire.

Many here in this Chamber have heard me talk about my connection with my mother's birth in Lithuania and the fact that I have cared about that country in a special way ever since I have served in Congress.

Life was bleak and oppressive for the Lithuanian people and all the others in Eastern Europe living under the boot heel of the Russian czar. Countries such as Poland, which saw such devastation during World War II, found themselves suffering decades of communist dictatorship following the war. So it was no surprise that when the Soviet Union finally collapsed, these nations were determined to join the community of democracies and NATO. In fact, the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia helped lead this historic path to freedom.

I remember so many aspects of it. In the shivering cold winter of 1991, millions of people joined hands to form a human chain, connecting all three nations in the Baltic area. They called for change. Then in January 1991, the Soviets sent their tanks into Lithuania and Latvia and other places. The net result was deadly. Those Soviet tanks killed 13 innocent people, and hundreds were injured in Lithuania. What were they asking for? Freedom. A chance to vote for their own future. Well, soon, the Baltic States stepped out even further and courageously declared independence from the Soviet Union. They wanted to reclaim their freedom.

I remember visiting Lithuania in those days, seeing sandbags stacked up outside the Parliament, which they called the Seimas, and schoolkids who were taking a break from class to come pray the Rosary in front of those barricades, light a couple candles—basically to be there for their country at that moment of testing.

If this sounds familiar with what we are hearing in Ukraine today, it is.

Those earlier days of independence had many brave souls coming forward with nothing but determination. Their small "arsenal of freedom," as they called it, which they brought me in the backdoor to show me, consisted of a broom closet with about 8 or 10 rifles in it. They were ready to stare down the Soviets if necessary.

I was so honored on this trip recently to visit with one of the champions of the restoration of freedom and Lithuania's Vytautas Landsbergis. Dr. Landsbergis is a music professor and was a leader of their revolution back to freedom in Lithuania. At 95 years of age, he remains a fierce champion of democracy, as he was in those early days confronting the Soviets.

I also met with former Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus, who left Lithuania for Chicago as a teenager and returned decades later to serve two terms as President and shepherd his nation, Lithuania, into the European Union and NATO.

I visited military bases in both Poland and Lithuania, where I met U.S. troops supporting the NATO mission to protect the young democracies from Russian aggression. Among the servicemembers were several from my State of Illinois—from Latham, IL, which is near Decatur; Montgomery, IL, near Aurora; and Kankakee. They came and told stories of their service in the Regular Army and how they were now working in Lithuania to prepare their armies for any possible battles in the future. It has been a wonderful, strong relationship.

In Poland, when you mention you are from Illinois, virtually every military officer says they have been our friends for a long time, and they have been because for over 20 years, the Illinois National Guard has been a direct contact with the Polish military forces, modernizing them and preparing them for any challenges that might come.